



Radio Pros OAB Town Hall Meeting

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NOV 13

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FYI Music by David Farrell

What follows is an abridged version of conversations at the Marriott Toronto Airport hotel.

Moderator: Maureen Holloway, co-host of Darren & Mo on CHFI (MH). Panelists: Julie Adam, Sr. VP, Rogers Radio (JA) Elmer Hilderbrand, CEO, Golden West Broadcasting (EH) Michele Pauchuck, advertising executive (MP); David Phillips, President & COO, NLogic (DP); and Chris Sisam, VP, Corus Radio East (CS).

MH: Coming to the end of a rating period, flat is the new up. How do you sell radio to your clients?

MP: Advertising, like radio, is changing to become more customer-centric. You need to do research and understand the analytics to understand what the consumer is doing – and that's lacking today. Especially in the digital realm.

DP: We need to have a think about existing analytics. Numeris does what it does well, but as an industry, we need to figure out what we need from digital.

EH: Canada has a dual broadcasting system; one in the major markets and everyone else. The challenge with connecting with customers in large markets is substantial. Not for small markets; they can create a portal that encompasses everything in the community. Radio in smaller markets can really become embedded.

MH: How can we better sell radio?

DP: We're not going to increase the number of listeners. But we can improve the yield, and we can find new revenue sources.

MP: Some radio stations are creating interesting content possibilities that they aren't taking advantage of.

MH: Radio personalities are encouraged and expected to be social media personalities. If social media is so important, why are we relying on our on-air personalities? Shouldn't we have dedicated social media staff?

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On The Move

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Who's moved?

Where is this person moving to?

Where has this person been working?

CS: It's both. You need both. Your personalities are your strength. They need to be leveraged to engage audiences.

EH: Our community portals generate over \$3M annually in revenue. This is a small market solution that probably wouldn't work in Toronto.

MH: Millennials: What does radio have to offer millennials?

DP: What radio offers is the same thing as other content; content they enjoy with good personalities. It's that simple. We believe too many myths about millennials.

JA: Millennials are listening (and she tells a story to prove the point). My kid loves Ellen (DeGeneres). She asked the daughter how do you watch the show? The daughter replied, does she have a show? She watches her on YouTube. The point is: everyone loves personalities, wherever they may be.

EH: Young people are only young for a time. They aren't leaving. They'll grow up and return.

MP: The content has to create that instant connection across platforms.

MH: Let's talk about cars. What about self-driving cars?

DP: We're overstating the danger of new technology. It's not necessarily a new change. We tend to automatically see new tech as threats. Why not view them as opportunities?

MH: Let's talk about sexual harassment. Bullying! How do we deal with it as an industry?

JA: I don't know a woman who hasn't experienced harassment. Men experience it too. Tolerance for harassment and bullying in the workplace has dropped substantially. The business has changed. Rogers has tonnes of HR people to help and the resources for those suffering.

CS: Where we've come from twenty years ago to today is big. Tolerance is dropping to zero. Codes of conduct are in place and there are alert lines that people can call.

MP: We exited someone from the company 18 months ago for sexual harassment. He was gone in 12 hours from the complaint being brought forward. That gives safe space to people who experience harassment.

JA: Our business has tolerated high performers with low values for too long.

MH: Talk about your greatest fears. What keeps you up at night? And what excites you?

DP: I have hope that radio has a big opportunity to innovate. My fear is that radio won't capitalize on the opportunity. Radio hasn't changed in 30 years. But it needs to adapt.

JA: What keeps me up at night is the people. Giving them a bright future. I'm excited about the possibilities and platforms; what keeps me up at night is how to leverage all of them effectively. We know it's about serving the community and listeners and advertisers but it's harder than ever.

But it is a fantastic business; it's fun.

CS: What keeps me up at night is the perceived relevance of traditional media in our industry. We need to battle daily. We're in a golden age of audio. Measurable audio.

EH: Nothing keeps me up. After 60 years, I've seen it all come and go. The most important thing is to look after our audience. We do that well and we'll be OK.

Anything else we should note?

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Some radio stations are downsizing in the wrong areas, such as in talent and news. We need to keep these areas strong.

DP: The pure plays (Google, Facebook, etc.) are good at driving fear in purchasers. Driving that fear is that if ad buyers don't get on board, they will be missing the next big thing or the next big platform.

Question from the floor: Thoughts on enabling the FM chips in smart phones?

CS: The OAB has been speaking with various cell phone manufacturers. Natural disasters have interestingly given a public policy reason to potentially turn them on, but there's still pushback in the US and Canada.

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